

BEFORE THE
ILLINOIS COMMERCE COMMISSION

IN THE MATTER OF:

VERDONNA WILLIAMS and
JESSIE WILLIAMS

V

PEOPLES GAS LIGHT AND COKE
COMPANY

Complaint as to billing/charges)
in Chicago, Illinois.)

No. 08-0546

Chicago, Illinois

October 30, 2008

Met pursuant to notice at 11:00 a.m.

BEFORE :

MR. JOHN RILEY, Administrative Law Judge.

APPEARANCES :

MS. VERDONNA WILLIAMS
1230 South Kildare Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60623
appeared pro se;

1 APPEARANCES: (Cont'd)

2

3 MR. MARK L. GOLDSTEIN
4 3019 Province Circle
5 Mundelein, Illinois 60060
6 appeared for Respondent.

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10 ALSO PRESENT:

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12 MS. JESSIE WILLIAMS, Complainant
13
14 MS. SOLEDAD BARRAGAN, Peoples Gas

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23 SULLIVAN REPORTING COMPANY, by
24 Teresann B. Giorgi, CSR

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<u>Witnesses:</u>	<u>Dir.</u>	<u>Crx.</u>	Re- <u>dir.</u>	Re- <u>crx.</u>	By <u>Examiner</u>
NONE					

E X H I B I T S

<u>APPLICANT'S</u>	<u>FOR IDENTIFICATION</u>	<u>IN EVIDENCE</u>
NONE		

1 JUDGE RILEY: Pursuant to the direction
2 of the Illinois Commerce Commission, I call
3 Docket 08-0546. This is a complaint by
4 Verdonna Williams and Jessie Williams versus Peoples
5 Gas Light and Coke Company as to billing and charges
6 in Chicago, Illinois.

7 Could you identify -- who is Verdonna
8 Williams?

9 MS. J. WILLIAMS: I'm Jessie.

10 JUDGE RILEY: You're Jessie.

11 MS. V. WILLIAMS: I'm Verdonna.

12 JUDGE RILEY: Good morning.

13 You are proceeding without an attorney
14 at this point?

15 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Yes.

16 JUDGE RILEY: And is your correct address
17 1230 South Kildare Avenue in Chicago?

18 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Yes.

19 JUDGE RILEY: Thank you.

20 In whose name is the account?

21 MS. J. WILLIAMS: Me.

22 JUDGE RILEY: It's in Jessie Williams.

1 MS. J. WILLIAMS: Yes.

2 JUDGE RILEY: Thank you.

3 Mr. Goldstein, would you enter an
4 appearance on behalf of Peoples Gas.

5 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Sure.

6 On behalf of the Peoples Gas Light and
7 Coke Company, Mark L. Goldstein, 3019 Province
8 Circle, Mundelein, Illinois 60060. My telephone
9 number is 847-949-1340.

10 And I have with me today Soledad
11 Barragan.

12 JUDGE RILEY: What's the Area Code up there?

13 MR. GOLDSTEIN: 60060.

14 JUDGE RILEY: Area Code.

15 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Oh, 847, I'm sorry.

16 JUDGE RILEY: Ms. Williams, I was reading the
17 complaint, I read it several times, is there any
18 specific sum of money that you're complaining about?

19 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Which Ms. Williams you talking
20 about?

21 JUDGE RILEY: Well, Ms. Jessie Williams' name is
22 on the account, is that correct?

1 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Yes, but it's supposed to be
2 my bill. That's where the problem come in at.

3 JUDGE RILEY: Why would it be your bill if the
4 name on the account is Jessie Williams?

5 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Right. See, that's where the
6 mix-up come in at.

7 Before, I lived at another address and
8 the account was in her name. I had it transferred.
9 So by her living down in the basement part of the
10 building that we was in, they just said I can just
11 transfer. And that's what they did.

12 JUDGE RILEY: Okay. Let me go back.

13 What was the old address?

14 MS. V. WILLIAMS: 739 South Kenneth.

15 JUDGE RILEY: South Kenneth?

16 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Uh-hum.

17 JUDGE RILEY: Okay. You were living at
18 739 South Kenneth.

19 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Uh-hum. And she was living in
20 the basement.

21 JUDGE RILEY: All right. Was the account in
22 your name at 739 South Kenneth?

1 MS. V. WILLIAMS: In her name (indicating).
2 JUDGE RILEY: It was in Jessie Williams' name.
3 And Jessie Williams was living in the
4 basement of the building?
5 MS. J. WILLIAMS: Yes.
6 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Right.
7 JUDGE RILEY: Now, was this a single-family
8 home?
9 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Well, it was like -- well, we
10 both had the same entrance to enter, but she -- I
11 could go down to her house from my house. So it's
12 just right down the street (sic), but we had
13 different meters, but the account was in her name.
14 JUDGE RILEY: Right. I'm just trying to find
15 out what kind of a building it was.
16 MS. V. WILLIAMS: It was a two-flat.
17 MS. J. WILLIAMS: Uh-hum.
18 JUDGE RILEY: A two-flat. Okay.
19 Jessie Williams lived in the basement
20 and you lived --
21 MS. V. WILLIAMS: On the first floor.
22 JUDGE RILEY: And were the units separately

1 metered?

2 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Yes.

3 JUDGE RILEY: How did you go from 739 South
4 Kenneth to 1230 South Kildare?

5 MS. V. WILLIAMS: In two years ago.

6 JUDGE RILEY: Okay.

7 MS. V. WILLIAMS: On the 18th of July.

8 JUDGE RILEY: Did you move at the same time?

9 MS. V. WILLIAMS: No.

10 JUDGE RILEY: Who moved first?

11 MS. V. WILLIAMS: I did.

12 JUDGE RILEY: You moved first to 1230 South
13 Kildare.

14 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Right.

15 JUDGE RILEY: And you had a gas account
16 separately in your name on the first floor of the
17 old address --

18 MS. V. WILLIAMS: No, it was in her name at the
19 old address. When I moved there, they just
20 transferred.

21 JUDGE RILEY: All right. Let me go back.
22 You said the units were separately

1 metered at 739 South Kenneth.

2 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Uh-hum.

3 JUDGE RILEY: They were both in the name of

4 Jessie Williams?

5 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Yes.

6 JUDGE RILEY: Okay. Ms. Williams -- Jessie

7 Williams, did you own this home?

8 MS. J. WILLIAMS: No, I didn't.

9 JUDGE RILEY: You didn't own the building.

10 MS. J. WILLIAMS: No.

11 JUDGE RILEY: You were a renter there.

12 MS. J. WILLIAMS: Yes.

13 JUDGE RILEY: Okay. All right. The units were

14 separately metered, but they were both in the name

15 of Jessie Williams, and you moved out.

16 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Right.

17 JUDGE RILEY: Verdonna moved out.

18 And did you close -- you wouldn't had

19 to close an account. You had no account in your

20 name.

21 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Right. So we both was moving,

22 but I just moved first. Her apartment wasn't

1 available yet.

2 So when I called the Gas Company to
3 cut the gas off, and I told them we was moving, they
4 just said -- I said, Do I need to get a new account
5 in my name? They said, No, just transfer it. And
6 that's what they did, they transferred it to
7 1230 South Kildare.

8 JUDGE RILEY: So Peoples Gas advised that --

9 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Right.

10 JUDGE RILEY: -- the account should be
11 transferred --

12 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Right.

13 Because they said that by her not
14 moving then, it was still in her name, so they just
15 transferred, and that's what they did.

16 JUDGE RILEY: And is that, in fact, what
17 happened?

18 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Yes.

19 JUDGE RILEY: Now, the dwelling at 1230 South
20 Kildare, is that a single-family home?

21 MS. V. WILLIAMS: It's a two-flat.

22 JUDGE RILEY: Two-flat.

1 MS. V. WILLIAMS: With a basement.

2 JUDGE RILEY: Is the basement a dwelling or --

3 MS. V. WILLIAMS: It's a -- you can live there.

4 JUDGE RILEY: Do you live in the same unit?

5 MS. V. WILLIAMS: No.

6 JUDGE RILEY: Okay. You live in separate units?

7 MS. V. WILLIAMS: I stay on the second floor.

8 JUDGE RILEY: Okay.

9 MS. V. WILLIAMS: And my basement is just

10 another apartment. I have someone on my first

11 floor.

12 JUDGE RILEY: And Jessie Williams lives on the

13 first floor?

14 MS. V. WILLIAMS: No.

15 JUDGE RILEY: You live on the second floor.

16 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Yes.

17 JUDGE RILEY: You have gas service in your name?

18 MS. V. WILLIAMS: No -- now, I do because I had

19 to switch it out of her name. Yes, it's very

20 complicated.

21 JUDGE RILEY: Let me go back.

22 When you moved to 1230 South Kildare

1 you lived in separate units?

2 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Yes.

3 JUDGE RILEY: Okay. Who had gas service in her

4 name?

5 MS. J. WILLIAMS: My granddaughter because --

6 MS. V. WILLIAMS: That's not what he's talking

7 about.

8 JUDGE RILEY: Okay. You did not have gas

9 service in your name when you moved to 1230 South

10 Kildare, is that correct, Jessie Williams?

11 MS. J. WILLIAMS: Yes -- no.

12 JUDGE RILEY: You did not have gas service --

13 MS. J. WILLIAMS: I didn't have gas.

14 JUDGE RILEY: Verdonna Williams, did you have

15 gas service in your name at 1230 South Kildare?

16 MS. V. WILLIAMS: No.

17 JUDGE RILEY: You did not.

18 Who did have gas service?

19 MS. V. WILLIAMS: No one. Like I was saying,

20 when I moved to 1230 they just transferred it

21 because where we were living at, it was like one

22 bill. So she just transferred the gas.

1 So when I called them and canceled it,
2 told them that I was moving, they transferred it.
3 So when they gave me the account number, when I
4 moved there, that's the account number that I had
5 been paying all the time. And that was it. It was
6 just in her name.

7 JUDGE RILEY: Well, if they transferred the gas
8 service from 739 South Kenneth to 1230 South
9 Kildare, it had to have been in one of your names.

10 MS. V. WILLIAMS: It was in her name.

11 JUDGE RILEY: That's what I asked.

12 MS. J. WILLIAMS: It was in mine.

13 JUDGE RILEY: Then you had gas service in the
14 name of Jessie Williams.

15 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Right.

16 JUDGE RILEY: I asked that.

17 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Right. It was still in her
18 name.

19 JUDGE RILEY: So gas service was in the name of
20 Jessie Williams --

21 MS. J. WILLIAMS: Yes.

22 JUDGE RILEY: -- not in the name of Verdonna

1 Williams.

2 MS. V. WILLIAMS: No.

3 JUDGE RILEY: Okay. And is the gas service
4 presently in the name of Jessie Williams?

5 MS. V. WILLIAMS: It still is, one of them is
6 now.

7 JUDGE RILEY: All right. You say "one of them,"
8 that connotes that there was gas service in two
9 different names.

10 MS. V. WILLIAMS: No, now because of the problem
11 that I had start having when I found out it was a
12 problem then this is when Peoples Gas finally decide
13 to put an account in my name, which I asked them
14 that from Day 1, and they told me that I didn't have
15 to do that.

16 JUDGE RILEY: All right. What was the problem
17 that occurred that caused them to put gas service in
18 your name?

19 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Because the bill is
20 outstanding and I have been complaining about the
21 bill for two years and they just kept telling me
22 that it wasn't anything, it wasn't a problem until I

1 found out that it was a problem.

2 JUDGE RILEY: Okay. When did they put the gas
3 service in your name?

4 MS. V. WILLIAMS: I had it in there now for two
5 months.

6 JUDGE RILEY: Two months.

7 And they switched the gas service to
8 your name because of the --

9 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Yes.

10 JUDGE RILEY: -- complaint?

11 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Right. Because I had been
12 calling the Commerce Commission. I've called down
13 here several times. I had made a complaint to
14 Peoples Gas numerous of times, over two years ago,
15 and I just kept getting waved off. They just never
16 did try to look into it.

17 JUDGE RILEY: When you moved into 1230 South
18 Kildare, it was just one single gas account then.

19 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Right.

20 JUDGE RILEY: And that was in the name of
21 Jessie Williams --

22 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Right.

1 JUDGE RILEY: -- which has since been switched.

2 And you're living in different units?

3 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Right, but -- yes, exactly,
4 because -- the problem is that my first floor tenant
5 is the bill that I'm paying, that's the problem.
6 That's where the problem come in at.

7 When they gave me my account number,
8 they gave me the account number for the first floor.
9 And every time that I will call and asking about my
10 gas bill, they would tell me, Oh, the gas is going
11 up. It's no problem.

12 JUDGE RILEY: Right.

13 MS. V. WILLIAMS: And I just getting waved off
14 for two years. So then I kept on telling them, I
15 said, No, because I'm at work all day. My gas bill
16 shouldn't be this high. So that's where the problem
17 come in at. All the time for two years I've been
18 paying for first floor bill and she's -- the lady on
19 the first floor, which is my niece, she been paying
20 my bill for the second floor.

21 And every time I call to the Gas
22 Company, they say, Oh, you're paying for two units.

1 And also I tell them, No, I'm not. I'm only paying
2 for one.

3 JUDGE RILEY: I'm just trying to get a picture
4 of who lives where.

5 You're on the second floor.

6 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Right.

7 JUDGE RILEY: At 1230 South Kildare.

8 Your niece is on the first floor.

9 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Right.

10 JUDGE RILEY: Where do you live?

11 MS. J. WILLIAMS: I live at 331 South Albany.

12 JUDGE RILEY: So you're not even living in the
13 building.

14 MS. J. WILLIAMS: No. But, see, the baby was
15 sick and they was paying our gas --

16 MS. V. WILLIAMS: He doesn't want to know about
17 the baby.

18 MS. J. WILLIAMS: The Gas Company came out to
19 cut the gas off and the baby was sick. And by me
20 being a grandma with no gas on there for the baby
21 and so, therefore, I told them to cut it on in my
22 name because --

1 JUDGE RILEY: Ms. Williams, when you did live at
2 1230 South Kildare, where did you live? What unit
3 were you in?

4 MS. V. WILLIAMS: She wasn't there.

5 MS. J. WILLIAMS: I don't live there.

6 MS. V. WILLIAMS: She stay on Albany.

7 MS. J. WILLIAMS: My niece stays on Kildare.

8 JUDGE RILEY: Okay. You never lived at
9 1230 South Kildare?

10 MS. J. WILLIAMS: No.

11 JUDGE RILEY: I thought you said when you left
12 739 South Kenneth you had moved to 1230 South
13 Kildare?

14 MS. V. WILLIAMS: No, I moved there.

15 JUDGE RILEY: You moved there.

16 MS. V. WILLIAMS: I moved there.

17 JUDGE RILEY: Okay.

18 MS. V. WILLIAMS: They stay on Albany because
19 they wouldn't let me --

20 JUDGE RILEY: I've got it down here now that gas
21 service was in the name of Jessie Williams at
22 1230 South Kildare.

1 MS. J. WILLIAMS: It is. It is. It's my
2 granddaughter's --

3 JUDGE RILEY: And yet you don't live there.

4 MS. J. WILLIAMS: Right.

5 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Because they transferred it
6 from when we were staying on Kenneth.

7 JUDGE RILEY: I see.

8 MS. V. WILLIAMS: That's where the problem come
9 in at.

10 JUDGE RILEY: So gas service was in the name of
11 Jessie Williams at Kenneth --

12 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Uh-hum.

13 JUDGE RILEY: -- and they simply transferred it
14 in her name to the Kildare address --

15 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Right.

16 JUDGE RILEY: -- and yet she was not living
17 there.

18 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Right. And this is the
19 problem that I asked. I say, Well, since I'm
20 moving -- we stayed together here -- by me moving,
21 do I have to put the gas in my name? They said, Oh,
22 no, just transfer it. And that's what they did.

1 So when they did this, she wasn't
2 living there. She stay on Albany. When she did
3 move, she stay on Albany. And now, she's having her
4 gas bill on Albany, they transferred that account to
5 this here bill (indicating). They transferred my
6 account to this bill. So everything that she that
7 had in her name is on this bill that I'm fighting to
8 pay.

9 JUDGE RILEY: Okay. Let me --

10 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Yes, it's very complicated.

11 JUDGE RILEY: You mentioned that after a time
12 your niece on the first floor was paying for the
13 second floor.

14 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Right.

15 JUDGE RILEY: And you on the second floor was
16 paying for the gas on the --

17 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Right.

18 JUDGE RILEY: These were separately metered
19 accounts, then.

20 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Exactly. But that's where the
21 problem come in there. Because when I would call
22 them and always inquired about the gas bill, they

1 would say, Oh, it's fine. They didn't have the
2 meters and stuff hooked up. I have my paperwork.
3 The bill that they send me was the very first
4 account that they gave me when they transferred it,
5 which no one else paid gas there but me, so this is
6 the account they gave me. So this is the account
7 that I have been paying.

8 But when it all -- just in May of this
9 year when I kept on complaining about, Please, send
10 somebody out here to check. Please, send somebody
11 out. They finally sent someone out. This is when
12 they found out we've been paying different
13 accounts --

14 JUDGE RILEY: Okay.

15 MS. V. WILLIAMS: -- for two years. And that's
16 my problem because the bill was outstanding. She
17 didn't believe that it was her bill because I found
18 out 'cause the meters was right -- the meters are
19 right, but they gave me this account number, but it
20 was for the first floor. That's my only complaint
21 here.

22 So for two years I've been paying for

1 her bill and she been paying for mine. But just the
2 fact of that, all of it was in my mother's name
3 because of the situation that they put it in. If
4 they had told me at the time that I had to put it in
5 my name when they transferred, I would have did
6 that, but they didn't, they just transferred it. So
7 I just kept it like that.

8 JUDGE RILEY: All right. What is the sum of
9 money that you're complaining about now? Can you
10 actually pinpoint --

11 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Well, now -- it was 2300.
12 Now, I think, it's -- they had had me on a payment
13 plan and they did stopped it and then I had to keep
14 paying it. So I think now the bill is still like
15 \$1500 still.

16 MS. J. WILLIAMS: 16.

17 MS. V. WILLIAMS: And I'm paying my bill and
18 that account and I can't do it.

19 JUDGE RILEY: You say "that account," that's the
20 account below, the first floor?

21 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Right.

22 This is the last one and it's at 1588.

1 And I just made a payment on it already for this
2 month. And all the bills that I have from Day 1, it
3 said second floor and the basement, which it meant
4 for the first floor.

5 JUDGE RILEY: Right.

6 MS. V. WILLIAMS: And it's been wrong. And I
7 kept telling them that and they wasn't -- Well,
8 you're paying for two. No, I'm not.

9 JUDGE RILEY: Is the basement habitable?

10 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Yes.

11 JUDGE RILEY: Does someone live there?

12 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Yes, it could be lived there,
13 but no one is there.

14 JUDGE RILEY: No one is there now.

15 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Right. I just -- you know,
16 like if my nephew or if someone -- because it's my
17 building.

18 JUDGE RILEY: Okay. Do you own the building?

19 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Yes.

20 JUDGE RILEY: Okay. Is the basement separately
21 metered?

22 MS. V. WILLIAMS: No. The first floor sends the

1 heat to the basement. This is what I was trying to
2 explain to them. They kept telling me it's the
3 second floor that's sending the heat to the
4 basement. I told them, No, it's not. It's the
5 first floor that's sending the heat. So it heats
6 both apartments. My apartment heats only one unit.
7 So where the problem lies where they kept -- the
8 first billing they say it's for the first floor --
9 supposed to be for the first floor, but it was for
10 the basement and the second floor, which that's not
11 true.

12 JUDGE RILEY: Okay.

13 MS. V. WILLIAMS: It's just for the second
14 floor.

15 So they billing me for two apartments,
16 which they shouldn't have.

17 JUDGE RILEY: So you, as the resident of the
18 second floor --

19 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Right.

20 JUDGE RILEY: -- with a separate meter were
21 being billed for both the second floor and the
22 basement.

1 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Right.

2 JUDGE RILEY: But what you're saying that the
3 first floor and the basement are supposed to be
4 together.

5 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Exactly.

6 And then it wouldn't have been that
7 problem if they hadn't gave me that account. The
8 account number that they gave me from Day 1 is the
9 same one that we're having the problem with, which
10 is 449 -- I can't see that good -- 9500044940524,
11 from Day 1 this is the account that they gave me,
12 from Day 1, this is for the first floor.

13 JUDGE RILEY: At 1230 South Kildare.

14 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Right.

15 JUDGE RILEY: This is the first floor account.

16 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Right. That's the first
17 floor.

18 JUDGE RILEY: It was in your name?

19 MS. V. WILLIAMS: It's in Jessie Williams' name,
20 but they had it for the second floor.

21 JUDGE RILEY: I'm just -- it's the first floor
22 account, but it was in the name of Jessie Williams

1 and they were billing you for the second floor?

2 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Okay.

3 JUDGE RILEY: That's just what I understood you
4 to say.

5 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Okay. Okay. Take it back.

6 When we transferred it, they
7 transferred it in her name.

8 JUDGE RILEY: That was from the 739 --

9 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Right, for me for the second
10 floor. But they transferred it for me for the
11 second floor in her name. They didn't tell me to
12 put it in my name.

13 So from Day 1 this is the same bill
14 that I've been paying for the two years, but it's
15 for the first floor. And now when I did finally
16 have someone to come out, now I see the account for
17 950046714809 (sic), that was supposed to have been
18 for the second floor. Which the first floor, my
19 niece, this account she was paying for the two
20 years.

21 JUDGE RILEY: All right.

22 MS. V. WILLIAMS: That's the only argument that

1 I brought to here because it wouldn't have been a
2 problem if I had had my right bill, which I did not.
3 I've been paying the first floor bill, which I have
4 paid out numerous amount of money because the bill
5 was not even mine. She was paying my bill. And
6 then when the bill got outstanding, now I'm trying
7 to see -- I'm waiting on the bill to come. I pay it
8 on-line. I never did get a bill. So then when I
9 did get a bill, it was already 4, \$500.

10 JUDGE RILEY: Okay.

11 MS. V. WILLIAMS: So I'm paying this. And all
12 this time I'm constantly calling them, asking them
13 to come out, check the meter. I think I'm paying
14 the wrong bill. Oh, no, you're not. This is what
15 the problem was. But if we had -- knew we were
16 paying each other's bill, she would have knew how to
17 regulate her heat and I would have been paying my
18 right bill.

19 So by me just now getting it, she
20 didn't want to accept this \$1500 because she's been
21 paying a bill.

22 JUDGE RILEY: Right.

1 MS. V. WILLIAMS: So that's the problem.

2 And now since I talked to the Commerce
3 Commission and they said they didn't find anything,
4 I have the man that came out, he made a notation of
5 what bill belong to what and that's what's the
6 problem. When I got back to them, called Peoples
7 Gas back again, they said it wasn't a problem. He
8 didn't find a complaint. Yes, it was a complaint
9 because -- yes, the meters was right, but they gave
10 me different bills. So that's what the problem was.

11 And every time I'm paying 3 and \$400
12 on one bill, the bill -- it's the wintertime, so the
13 bill is still 4, 500, so I can never catch up with
14 it.

15 JUDGE RILEY: I'm going to --

16 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Yeah, it's something. I was
17 going to leave it alone, but then I had -- my
18 mother got sick --

19 JUDGE RILEY: Okay.

20 MS. V. WILLIAMS: -- and it's in her name. And
21 I'm just trying to clear her name out of it.

22 JUDGE RILEY: All right. The second floor

1 account was 449500044940524, is that correct?

2 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Let me look back at these
3 papers. You're saying the original account that's
4 supposed to been me?

5 JUDGE RILEY: Well --

6 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Is that what you're saying?

7 JUDGE RILEY: When you moved from 739 South
8 Kenneth into 1230 South Kildare, what unit did you
9 occupy when you moved?

10 MS. V. WILLIAMS: The second floor.

11 JUDGE RILEY: That was the second floor.
12 What is the account number for the
13 second floor?

14 MS. V. WILLIAMS: That's what I'm talking about.

15 JUDGE RILEY: Okay.

16 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Now, do you want the account
17 number that they gave me or the account number that
18 it was supposed to be?

19 JUDGE RILEY: The one that reads on the bill.
20 It should say "Second Floor" on the bill.

21 MS. V. WILLIAMS: That's what I'm telling you.
22 It did say "Second Floor," but it was for the first

1 floor.

2 JUDGE RILEY: Hold on.

3 The second floor account number was

4 4495000, is that the one that you read off to me

5 first?

6 MS. V. WILLIAMS: The one that they gave me when

7 I moved there ended in 0524.

8 JUDGE RILEY: Right. Okay. That was the one

9 that you read off.

10 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Right.

11 JUDGE RILEY: But that was in Jessie Williams'

12 name?

13 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Yes.

14 JUDGE RILEY: All right.

15 MS. V. WILLIAMS: But it was also for the first

16 floor, that they gave me for the second floor.

17 JUDGE RILEY: Okay. Now, is there another

18 account number for the first floor?

19 MS. V. WILLIAMS: This is the account number for

20 the first floor, it ends in 2044.

21 JUDGE RILEY: Read the whole thing. Slowly.

22 MS. V. WILLIAMS: It's not 44. It's

1 9500046714809.

2 JUDGE RILEY: That was --

3 MS. V. WILLIAMS: 90, I'm sorry.

4 JUDGE RILEY: 14890?

5 MS. V. WILLIAMS: 14890.

6 JUDGE RILEY: And that was the first floor

7 account.

8 MS. V. WILLIAMS: This the bill (sic) that they

9 gave her, but it was mine for the second floor.

10 JUDGE RILEY: Okay.

11 MS. V. WILLIAMS: It's the one she's been

12 paying.

13 See, the account numbers that they

14 gave us was wrong. So we've been paying each

15 others' bill. That's what the problem was, which no

16 one felt to try to look into it.

17 JUDGE RILEY: So the niece was paying for the

18 second floor account --

19 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Yes.

20 JUDGE RILEY: -- and you were paying for the

21 first floor account.

22 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Right.

1 JUDGE RILEY: And, yet, it was Peoples Gas'
2 opinion -- or their stance was that the second floor
3 and the basement were running together --
4 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Exactly.
5 JUDGE RILEY: -- when you're saying it was the
6 first floor and the basement were running together.
7 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Exactly.
8 JUDGE RILEY: Okay.
9 MS. V. WILLIAMS: They never did send no one out
10 to look at it until May of this year. And, yes,
11 they say the meters are right. Yes, I didn't doubt
12 the meters was right. But the account number that
13 they gave me was the one that was wrong.
14 JUDGE RILEY: Okay. Let's stop right there.
15 MS. V. WILLIAMS: These bills are here.
16 JUDGE RILEY: Okay. Mr. Goldstein, what is
17 Peoples Gas' stance on this?
18 MR. GOLDSTEIN: I'd rather have Ms. Barragan
19 explain it. Let me see if I can take a shot at it
20 and she can correct me as we go along.
21 JUDGE RILEY: Go ahead.
22 MR. GOLDSTEIN: I was as confused about the

1 complaint when I read it as you were, Judge.

2 The bottomline of it is, that the
3 meters were mislabeled. And the meter that should
4 have been supplying -- was supplying the basement
5 and the first floor. The gas usage is correct for
6 that. The second floor is another meter and that's
7 where Verdonna Williams is occupying. But she did
8 not have the account in her name until very
9 recently.

10 And so all of the gas billings were
11 billed to Jessie Williams. And Jessie Williams was,
12 essentially, paying for basement and first floor
13 properly.

14 The problem is not all the monies were
15 paid for the basement and first floor account and
16 there's about a \$1300 balance on that account.

17 The problem I think is, that we're
18 getting confused about things being transferred from
19 a South Albany account and the South Kenneth
20 account. Nothing was transferred in as far as I can
21 determine at this point in time.

22 JUDGE RILEY: Okay.

1 MR. GOLDSTEIN: And all the usage that was
2 billed for 1230 South Kildare was usage for the
3 meters at that building. And there's almost a zero
4 balance for the second floor account for Verdonna
5 Williams. And there's a, as I said, \$1300 balance
6 or so for the account of Jessie Williams, who is the
7 customer of record for the basement and the first
8 floor.

9 JUDGE RILEY: Oh, I see. Okay.

10 Currently, is Jessie Williams the
11 account holder of record for the first floor and the
12 basement?

13 MR. GOLDSTEIN: That is correct.

14 JUDGE RILEY: That's as of today.

15 MR. GOLDSTEIN: That is as of today. And as of
16 a month or two ago, as Verdonna Williams stated, she
17 is now the account holder for the second floor.

18 But as I also said there's little or
19 no balance on that account.

20 JUDGE RILEY: And Peoples Gas records show
21 something like a \$1300 balance?

22 MR. GOLDSTEIN: That's correct.

1 JUDGE RILEY: And that's on the first floor.

2 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Yes. And as I said, the meter

3 for the first floor also provides heat to the

4 basement.

5 JUDGE RILEY: When you say the meters were

6 mislabeled, what does that mean?

7 MR. GOLDSTEIN: That means --

8 MS. BARRAGAN: Originally we had it listed

9 "Basement" and "Second Floor."

10 JUDGE RILEY: Okay. For the court reporter's

11 benefit, could you state your name, please.

12 MS. BARRAGAN: Soledad Barragan.

13 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Could you spell it.

14 MS. BARRAGAN: S-o-l-e-d-a-d, last name,

15 B-a-r-r-a-g-a-n.

16 JUDGE RILEY: Thank you.

17 Go ahead.

18 MS. BARRAGAN: So, originally they were labeled

19 "Basement" and "Second Floor."

20 JUDGE RILEY: The meters?

21 MS. BARRAGAN: For one meter. The other meter

22 was labeled as "Floor 1."

1 JUDGE RILEY: Okay. And that is what Verdonna
2 Williams said --

3 MS. BARRAGAN: Right.

4 JUDGE RILEY: -- the second floor and the
5 basement were being billed --

6 MS. BARRAGAN: That both accounts were in the
7 name of Jessie Williams.

8 JUDGE RILEY: First floor and second floor.

9 MS. BARRAGAN: Correct.

10 JUDGE RILEY: And because of the mislabeling,
11 should it have been that the first floor and the
12 basement --

13 MS. BARRAGAN: Yes.

14 JUDGE RILEY: -- the first floor was providing
15 the heat to the basement.

16 MS. BARRAGAN: Yes. So it should have been
17 Basement, Floor 1 and then the other meter on its
18 own was the second floor.

19 JUDGE RILEY: Okay. Right.

20 Now, is there any relief coming to
21 Ms. Williams because of the mislabeling?

22 MS. BARRAGAN: No, we were still billing

1 appropriately because -- the only problem here is
2 that all accounts were listed under Jessie Williams'
3 name.

4 JUDGE RILEY: All right.

5 MS. BARRAGAN: So she's getting billed
6 appropriately for the correct meter except on the
7 bill it showed "Basement" and "Floor 2" instead of
8 "Basement" and "Floor 1."

9 JUDGE RILEY: But it was still the same amount
10 of cubic feet being --

11 MS. BARRAGAN: Yes.

12 JUDGE RILEY: -- used. There was no change in
13 that.

14 MS. BARRAGAN: There was no change in that.

15 JUDGE RILEY: All right. And everything was in
16 the name of Jessie Williams until a couple of months
17 ago, is that correct?

18 MS. BARRAGAN: That's correct. As of July 9th,
19 the second floor was changed over to Verdonna
20 Williams.

21 JUDGE RILEY: And whose name is on the first
22 floor?

1 MS. BARRAGAN: It's still in Jessie Williams'
2 name.

3 JUDGE RILEY: And as of today that's still
4 correct?

5 MS. BARRAGAN: Correct.

6 JUDGE RILEY: Okay. Has the mislabeling been
7 corrected?

8 MS. BARRAGAN: Yes, it has.

9 JUDGE RILEY: When was that corrected?

10 MS. BARRAGAN: June 10th of this year.

11 JUDGE RILEY: My next question is, where do we
12 go from here? What is Peoples' stance, that all
13 billings were proper and that Ms. Williams still
14 owes the balance stipulated?

15 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Yes. As I said, since,
16 essentially, Jessie Williams was the account holder,
17 she would be the one responsible. If Verdonna
18 Williams wants to take responsibility --

19 MS. V. WILLIAMS: That's the problem.

20 MR. GOLDSTEIN: -- I guess, she could. She did
21 own the building -- she does own the building, I'm
22 sorry, not the past tense.

1 JUDGE RILEY: I'm sorry.

2 MR. GOLDSTEIN: She does own the building, not
3 in the past tense.

4 JUDGE RILEY: Right.

5 MR. GOLDSTEIN: So if she wants to take
6 responsibility for the bills, that's perfectly fine,
7 we'll work out something with her.

8 JUDGE RILEY: But is it the position of Peoples
9 Gas that the account person whose name is on the
10 account is, essentially, responsible for the bill?

11 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Absolutely.

12 JUDGE RILEY: So it would not be the building
13 owner, it would be -- whoever the tenant was --
14 well, whoever the tenant of record is.

15 MR. GOLDSTEIN: I doubt there's a lease here.

16 MS. V. WILLIAMS: No, I don't have a lease.

17 MR. GOLDSTEIN: It's the mother and the
18 daughter.

19 MS. V. WILLIAMS: And my mother does not stay
20 there, so that's the only other problem. It was in
21 her name because it was transferred.

22 MR. GOLDSTEIN: It's a question, Judge --

1 MS. V. WILLIAMS: And Mojanai (phonetic)
2 Marshall is the one that stays on the first floor.

3 MR. GOLDSTEIN: -- when you have a multiunit
4 apartment building, who should take responsibility
5 for the bill. And in this instance, the mother who
6 isn't even living there, took responsibility for the
7 bill and, I guess, we have to hold her responsible.

8 MS. V. WILLIAMS: But, your Honor, the only
9 thing about it is that she's not paying any of this.
10 Her name -- my niece is paying for her apartment on
11 the first floor. I'm paying for the second floor.
12 She had not paid not one cent. All the money that
13 they took out of the account is my money that I've
14 been paying for a misbill.

15 In reality if I had knew what my bill
16 was, it would never have got like that, no way,
17 because Mojanai Marshall would have known how much
18 her bill was.

19 JUDGE RILEY: Now, Ms. Marshall, is her name on
20 the first floor account?

21 MS. V. WILLIAMS: No, it's not. It's Jessie
22 Williams' name. That's where the problem come in.

1 When she did move there, I guess it was still in the
2 previous owner's name, so it wasn't no gas going,
3 period, was in her name (sic). It still was on, but
4 it wasn't in nobody's name. And that's when we got
5 a letter and it stated that the gas had to be cut
6 going down on the first floor. So that's how come
7 my mother ended up letting her cut it on in her
8 name.

9 But in reality, if we had had the
10 right bills at the time, I would have knew how much
11 my bill was and it would have been paying a correct
12 bill. And she would have been paying her correct
13 bill. But it's been two years and we've been paying
14 the same bill all the time. She didn't want to take
15 responsibility of this being her bill. And by me
16 being the one that was paying the bill from Day 1,
17 that's how come it kept falling on me. And I felt
18 like I wanted to pay it and trying to pay it because
19 it was in my mother's name. But then it kept
20 getting so outstanding, I couldn't keep up with
21 Mojanai. So now that she knows that her bill is not
22 hers, now I got to pay my bill and this outstanding

1 bill and I can't do it.

2 JUDGE RILEY: Well, what does Ms. Marshall pay?
3 I mean, she's living there and she has the benefit
4 of the heat. Does she pay anything at all toward
5 the --

6 MS. V. WILLIAMS: That's what I was saying. She
7 was paying my bill all this time. But since it's
8 now -- since we know that the bill is where it's
9 supposed to be now, she's paying her current
10 charges. She's not paying anything from the big
11 bill. I'm still trying to pay that.

12 And then they end up cutting it off
13 and they tell me to send in \$300 for that. I paid
14 that. Then they said I had to go a medical data.
15 They still charged me to cut the gas back on. I
16 paid the \$300, they still cut the gas off.

17 I have talked to you all down here and
18 they said that they shouldn't have cut it off. They
19 cut it off anyway. So that \$300 I lost. Then I
20 paid another \$400 to cut it -- they said I had to
21 get a medical data for her in her name. I took her
22 to the doctor. They cut it back on for the medical

1 data and they still charged me another \$400. So
2 they added that money on there.

3 From the Albany bill they added \$700
4 to the bill, another \$700. I can't do it.

5 JUDGE RILEY: Well, I don't understand what
6 they're adding. You're saying you're making these
7 payments and they're adding this stuff to the bill.

8 MS. V. WILLIAMS: This is what I'm saying. I
9 have all of them right here. Every time I make a
10 payment, it's 3 or 4 or \$500 and they add another 2.
11 Like I say, I never did even see what my original
12 account number was.

13 Then, when she stopped paying, they
14 added that money to the account because it was in
15 Jessie Williams (sic). So everything is added and
16 all of it is right here.

17 JUDGE RILEY: Well, if Jessie Williams wasn't
18 living there at any time, why did you leave the
19 account in her name?

20 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Because when I did find out on
21 the 15th when the man came, I have 5-15, when I
22 finally got someone to come out, and he told me

1 about the mix-up, this is when I called them again.
2 I say, Well, look, okay, so what are you all going
3 to do about this? I say, The meters were right, but
4 you gave me the wrong account number. Oh, there's
5 nothing we're going to do about it because it was in
6 Jessie Williams' name. I say, Yes, but my mother is
7 not paying on the account. You didn't get no check
8 account (sic) from her. I'm paying all of this. So
9 for two years I've been paying an account that was
10 not mine. So I have paid up a numerous amount of
11 money.

12 So to that effect, they still say they
13 doing (sic) anything about it because it was in her
14 name. So by being in her name and she don't have an
15 account, I felt like, Okay, I'm going to get this
16 out of my mother's name. Then, at that time they
17 say, No, you can't get out of her name because this
18 bill have to be paid.

19 So now when they finally decide to
20 come out and they see the mix-up, this is when now
21 they call me now. Oh, Ms. Williams, we need to get
22 this out of Ms. Williams' name. And we need to

1 change them. We need to put this in your name and
2 take it out of your mother's name so that now we can
3 get this situation together.

4 So now they want to help me now just
5 by getting out it out of my (sic) name, so I would
6 have what I have now.

7 JUDGE RILEY: Jessie Williams still has an
8 account in her name now, doesn't she?

9 MS. V. WILLIAMS: The first floor is still in
10 her name because they wouldn't let my niece take it
11 out of the name until the bill is paid. That's why
12 it's still there.

13 So by -- and they finding out now that
14 the account that I've been paying was not mine and
15 I'm on the second floor, now that they see it, then
16 they say, Okay, Ms. Williams, well, you put this one
17 in your name. Now they want to give me my own
18 account. But I asked them that from Day 1 and they
19 said I didn't have to. So I did never change it.
20 So now there's a problem, now they changed it.

21 But then they say -- when my niece
22 tried to call and get it out of my mother's name,

1 they would say, No, this bill have to be paid first.

2 And all this in Jessie Williams' name, everything in

3 my mother's name. They put everything on the bill.

4 JUDGE RILEY: And the last bill -- it's my

5 understanding it's the first floor account with the

6 name of Jessie Williams that's causing the problem

7 here.

8 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Exactly.

9 JUDGE RILEY: That's the one that's got the

10 large balance.

11 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Exactly.

12 MS. J. WILLIAMS: And the --

13 JUDGE RILEY: Go ahead.

14 MS. J. WILLIAMS: And the bill from Albany, they

15 put that -- that's where I lived --

16 MS. V. WILLIAMS: That's \$700.

17 MS. J. WILLIAMS: They would let me move where I

18 wanted to move there (sic). So when we was running

19 around trying to find me a place and the tenants

20 upstairs had three units on to me and I've got proof

21 that -- that's where the \$700 come from, I had been

22 paying for it. The people at the building say now I

1 don't have to pay no gas bill. I had paid it for a
2 whole year. And now I don't have to pay no gas
3 bill. So I ain't got -- the balance -- when she
4 told me to call and cut it off, I called and cut it
5 off. And they turned around and sent me the bill
6 from over there what I owed -- what I owed when they
7 cut it off and they put that on my bill --

8 MS. V. WILLIAMS: \$700.

9 MS. J. WILLIAMS: -- over back over here.

10 MS. V. WILLIAMS: They added that \$700 bill from
11 Albany. It's a duplex over there where she stayed.
12 And everybody was using the washer and dryer, so
13 everything was on her bill over there. So when they
14 finally say that she don't have to pay it, it was a
15 building's problem because they should have fixed
16 that differently. They said something about
17 Section 8, I don't know.

18 But then they said the \$700 bill,
19 since that was in her name, this was in her name,
20 they put everything on this bill. So I got all of
21 it. I didn't even know who account that was. Now
22 I'm trying to call them back, Well, who \$700 bill?

1 And who \$87 this? So now I got four different
2 accounts.

3 They added me another -- they opened
4 up another account on the first floor. They charged
5 me for that, for opening up a new account. They
6 gave her another account number now. This is a new
7 account number that they got and they charged for
8 this account. Now the new account is 57.50. They
9 opened up another. They tell me to open up another
10 account.

11 JUDGE RILEY: You have another account there?
12 In whose name is it?

13 MS. V. WILLIAMS: It's all in Jessie Williams.
14 But they opened up another account and charged me
15 for opening up that account, on the same floor.

16 JUDGE RILEY: If the name is -- if the account
17 is in the name of Jessie Williams, why are they
18 charging you? That's what I don't understand.

19 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Because the original account
20 number they gave me for the first floor. So that's
21 how come I keep saying for me, because the original
22 account number that they gave me, they gave me, but

1 it was for the first floor, but I've been paying it.
2 So everything is for the first floor. I've been
3 paying it because it's on the account that they gave
4 me for the second floor. That's the problem.
5 That's where the problem come in.

6 If I had knew my account for the
7 second floor, I wouldn't have this problem. But I'm
8 paying the first floor account, which I'm thinking
9 is mine, that's where the problem come in at. And
10 that's what I was trying to explain to them.

11 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Maybe we can short-circuit it.
12 I don't quite understand all of what Ms. Williams'
13 has just said. We don't have any information about
14 anything being transferred in from 331 South
15 Albany --

16 MS. V. WILLIAMS: I have it right with me.

17 MR. GOLDSTEIN: What I'm saying, we don't have
18 any of that information with us today. We'll
19 certainly check into that.

20 But I think that the problem that
21 Ms. Williams has, it's not with Peoples Gas, it's
22 with her niece.

1 MS. V. WILLIAMS: No, it is actually with
2 Peoples Gas.

3 MR. GOLDSTEIN: And so she should be looking to
4 her niece to be paying a portion of the bill that
5 was outstanding. And, unfortunately, everything was
6 in the account of the mother, Jessie Williams.

7 JUDGE RILEY: So it's Peoples' stance that all
8 the billings were proper and adequate --

9 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Yes.

10 JUDGE RILEY: -- and it's just that the account
11 holders can sort out who owes what.

12 MR. GOLDSTEIN: And if people would -- if all
13 these individuals, Verdonna, Jessie and the niece
14 had taken responsibility for their correct accounts
15 and where they lived, then I don't think there would
16 have been a problem.

17 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Well, see, that's --

18 MR. GOLDSTEIN: But maybe I'm wrong.

19 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Yes.

20 MR. GOLDSTEIN: But that's the way it seems to
21 me.

22 MS. V. WILLIAMS: I think so because the only

1 problem that I have -- yes, you are right, and that
2 would have been happening, I would have took the
3 right account, if you had gave me the right account.
4 If they had not sent a bill for second floor and
5 basement from Day 1, two years ago, I would have had
6 the right account. I didn't generate the numbers.
7 Peoples Gas generated this account number. That's
8 the account number they gave me for the second
9 floor. That's the account that I've been paying.
10 Now, two years later, I find out it's for the first
11 floor. Well, how did I know that? I don't know
12 that. That's where the bill came in at.

13 And Mojanai Marshall have been paying
14 her bill for the first floor, but it was for the
15 second floor because she had the wrong account. And
16 we got the two accounts two different times. We
17 didn't get them the same time. I got mine months
18 before she got hers. And this is the account that
19 you gave me, but you gave it to me for the first
20 floor, not the second floor. And if she had been
21 getting her bills, she could have been paying her
22 bills. I would have knew what my bill was, which

1 I'm at work every day. I know good well my bill
2 shouldn't have been that high.

3 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Well, keep in mind, Judge, that
4 until July 9th of this year everything was in the
5 name of --

6 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Jessie Williams.

7 MR. GOLDSTEIN: -- the mother, Jessie Williams.

8 MS. V. WILLIAMS: But, also, the money that you
9 all been getting was from Verdonna Williams'
10 checking account.

11 MR. GOLDSTEIN: But that -- we have no knowledge
12 of that part. You know, we don't keep those kinds
13 of records. If somebody wants to volunteer and pay
14 on the account of Jessie Williams, and it's a niece
15 or her daughter, we wouldn't keep a record of that.

16 JUDGE RILEY: Okay. We are, obviously, at an
17 impasse here --

18 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Right.

19 JUDGE RILEY: -- because Peoples Gas, your
20 position is what it is.

21 MR. GOLDSTEIN: That's correct, Judge.

22 JUDGE RILEY: It doesn't look like to me there's

1 any common ground for a settlement or --

2 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Well, I guess what we could
3 offer is some kind of payment arrangements on the
4 outstanding balance.

5 MS. V. WILLIAMS: It's on a payment arrangement.
6 I've been trying to do that forever.

7 MR. GOLDSTEIN: She's on it already?

8 MS. BARRAGAN: Yes.

9 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Yes. I've tried that three
10 times. They cut it off, cut it back on, cut it off,
11 cut it back on.

12 JUDGE RILEY: Excuse me.

13 There's already a payment arrangement?

14 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Yes.

15 JUDGE RILEY: Is that currently in effect?

16 MS. BARRAGAN: Yes, it's currently in effect.

17 JUDGE RILEY: All right. I don't know where the
18 parties want to go from here, where the Complainants
19 want to go from here. Peoples Gas has made its
20 stance pretty good.

21 Do you want to continue this at a
22 formal hearing and contest the sum of money?

1 MS. V. WILLIAMS: It's just the fact that I
2 still have a problem with it now because the first
3 floor know that the bills is wrong. I still got
4 that bill. I can't afford to pay another \$1300 on
5 top me paying an outstanding bill for two years
6 already because I had the wrong account. I've been
7 paying it already. And now I'm still paying for it.
8 And now I have to pay my own. And I'm only trying
9 to pay it -- and I was only trying to pay it because
10 it's in my mother's name. I don't want to mess up
11 her name. She don't have any money. She can't pay
12 this bill.

13 JUDGE RILEY: Well, my question is, can't you
14 get any relief from the niece?

15 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Well, she's paying her own
16 bill now. I mean --

17 JUDGE RILEY: But didn't she pay any part of the
18 bill that she had incurred before?

19 MS. V. WILLIAMS: What she --

20 JUDGE RILEY: She's been living there all along,
21 hasn't she?

22 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Yes. But she been paying my

1 bill, that I was making for upstairs, thinking it
2 was her bill. And I've been paying her bill,
3 thinking it was my bill.

4 JUDGE RILEY: And this is because of the
5 mislabeled meters.

6 MS. V. WILLIAMS: And it's because the bills was
7 wrong, that's how come we got this problem.

8 No, she don't want to take over and
9 pay another \$1500 in a one lump sum.

10 JUDGE RILEY: What is the payment arrangement
11 that you have right now?

12 MS. V. WILLIAMS: They got me now paying \$123 a
13 month now, plus my own bill.

14 JUDGE RILEY: For whatever the usage is.

15 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Right. And it's hard. I
16 mean, it's hard. I can't do it. And I just was
17 trying to do it. And she tried to go get help with
18 these other little programs, CEDA, and all this, I
19 mean, they only -- they gave her \$400, but that was
20 it. That was the only help that they gave. And
21 it's just hard. I just can't do it.

22 JUDGE RILEY: Right. Well, the two things that

1 we can do right now, one is either go to hearing, to
2 a formal evidentiary hearing, or not go to a formal
3 evidentiary hearing. I mean, you are certainly
4 entitled to your day in court. And if that's your
5 choice, we can certainly set a hearing date for --

6 MS. V. WILLIAMS: I mean, if they not going to
7 try and adjust the bill or even -- I mean, if they
8 even take half of the money off of there, I will
9 still try and pay the other half. If they even cut
10 that all the way half and I'll pay half, I'll try
11 and pay it, if they do this.

12 Because like I say, I only have a
13 problem with it because in reality it's not my bill.
14 I'm only trying to pay it because it's in my
15 mother's name and get it out of her name. Now that
16 I have mine in my name, I have to pay mine and I'm
17 trying to pay hers. And I just can't do it,
18 your Honor, that's all. That's my only argument.

19 And I just don't want it not to be
20 paid because, in reality, Mojanai Marshall can go
21 and get it in her name and the bill will still be
22 there under her name and they still won't get paid.

1 I'm not trying to do that.

2 JUDGE RILEY: Okay.

3 MS. V. WILLIAMS: I'm willing to pay it, or even
4 if they cut it half price or something.

5 JUDGE RILEY: I still think that your remedy is
6 with the niece, but -- it would be purely a private
7 remedy anyway.

8 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Yeah, because if she can get
9 it in her name and she can be paying just what she's
10 using, not this past bill. She don't have to pay
11 this past bill because it's not in her name.

12 JUDGE RILEY: Hold on. I have to go and get one
13 thing.

14 (Whereupon, a short
15 recess was taken.)

16 JUDGE RILEY: Back on the record.

17 As I said, the two things that we can
18 do now are either go to hearing or not go to
19 hearing. You're certainly entitled to your day in
20 court. And if you want to make a formal case of
21 this, we can certainly set a date for that.

22 Mr. Goldstein, I'll ask Peoples Gas

1 one more time, has your stance changed at all?

2 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Well, I guess that the real
3 problem is, Judge, that based upon all that we've
4 heard this morning, the bottom line of it all is
5 there should be three separate meters for the
6 property, one for the basement, one for the first
7 floor and one for the second floor. And the cost of
8 separating the first floor and the basement meter
9 into two meters would be the responsibility of the
10 owner of the building and it would be expensive and
11 I don't know that it would solve anything.

12 The other part of the problem is that
13 if the niece were to become the account holder for
14 the basement and the first floor, she's only living
15 on the first floor. She would be responsible for
16 heating the basement also because there's just one
17 meter for both. And then we'd have a problem with
18 her filing a complaint because she'll be overbilled
19 for just the usage of the property.

20 JUDGE RILEY: It's speculating, but it could
21 happen.

22 MR. GOLDSTEIN: This is a -- you know, this is a

1 Catch-22, I guess. And I guess the only thing we
2 could do is extend out the payment arrangements so
3 that it would be a little easier on Ms. Williams.

4 JUDGE RILEY: Would you be willing to consider
5 that?

6 MS. V. WILLIAMS: I don't know. Because like I
7 say, it's still high either way it goes because the
8 winter is coming --

9 JUDGE RILEY: Right.

10 MS. V. WILLIAMS: -- I don't know how much my
11 gas bill is going to be. And then they want a
12 must (sic) hundred and some dollars out of me.

13 JUDGE RILEY: You said \$123 --

14 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Yes.

15 JUDGE RILEY: -- plus your current usage.

16 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Right. But, then -- and
17 that's just for that, back payment. Now I don't
18 know what mine's going to be for the winter months
19 coming.

20 JUDGE RILEY: Right, the current usage.

21 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Right. And I may not be able
22 to afford that. And that's the problem.

1 JUDGE RILEY: Well, I think the safe thing to
2 do -- is there something further?

3 MR. GOLDSTEIN: No.

4 JUDGE RILEY: Well, I think the safe thing would
5 be to set a hearing date.

6 MR. GOLDSTEIN: I think what we will do, Judge,
7 is review this a little more carefully. It was, as
8 I said at the beginning, a little bit confusing
9 because they threw in the 739 South Kenneth address
10 into this mix --

11 JUDGE RILEY: Right.

12 MR. GOLDSTEIN: -- and the mix-up of the meters
13 and the so forth. What I will do is have
14 Ms. Barragan call Ms. Williams and see if they can
15 work out some arrangement which will make it a
16 little easier for her to make payments.

17 JUDGE RILEY: All right. Would you be amenable
18 to that? At least give that a try?

19 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Well, I'll see what they're
20 talking about. But like I say, either way it go it
21 still the money that they want, the money that I
22 don't have, the money that I don't know what I'm

1 going to have with my bill.

2 JUDGE RILEY: Right.

3 MS. V. WILLIAMS: And the only reason why I am
4 willing to try and pay it is because it's in my
5 mother's name.

6 JUDGE RILEY: Okay.

7 MS. V. WILLIAMS: And it is not my bill. That's
8 my problem, it's not my bill and I'm still willing
9 to try and pay it, that bill like they should reduce
10 a little bit better than that, because it is not my
11 bill.

12 JUDGE RILEY: Well, I know, I understand that.

13 MS. V. WILLIAMS: And they charged me twice,
14 your Honor, they charged me the \$400 and said that
15 the medical data form, that I had to have, would cut
16 the gas back on. I gave them the medical data form
17 and they still charged me \$400.

18 JUDGE RILEY: Okay. I understand that.

19 I guess I need a clear answer, are you
20 willing to try to work with Peoples Gas for a more
21 palatable -- a more manageable payment arrangement,
22 would you be willing to do that?

1 Because what I was going to suggest is
2 why don't we set this for another short status. You
3 can work with Peoples Gas in the meantime and see if
4 you can't come up with something that would be a
5 little bit more manageable for you this winter --

6 MS. V. WILLIAMS: And if not --

7 JUDGE RILEY: -- that might solve the problem.

8 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Right.

9 JUDGE RILEY: But you still have your day in
10 court --

11 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Yes, I'll run with it. If
12 they don't come up with something better for me to
13 deal with, then, yes, I want to take it to court
14 because if it turns out to me -- like I say, it's
15 just hard for me to try to pay something that's not
16 mine.

17 JUDGE RILEY: All right. I understand that. I
18 understand that.

19 Today is the 30th. Do you want to
20 revisit this thing in about three weeks?

21 MR. GOLDSTEIN: On the 20th of November, Judge,
22 is that what you're looking at?

1 JUDGE RILEY: Right.

2 MR. GOLDSTEIN: That's fine with us, Judge.

3 JUDGE RILEY: November 20th, we'll take another
4 look at this and see if you haven't gotten something
5 that's a little bit more manageable for you.

6 All right. We'll just set it for
7 another status.

8 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Okay. 11:00 o'clock, Judge?

9 JUDGE RILEY: 11:00 a.m.?

10 MS. V. WILLIAMS: That is fine. I just need --
11 can I have a copy of it so I can take to my job?

12 JUDGE RILEY: A copy of?

13 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Of the date, so I can get that
14 day off.

15 JUDGE RILEY: You'll be getting a formal notice
16 from the Clerk's Office and it will be with the
17 Illinois Commerce Commission letterhead and it will
18 specifically say that we set November 20th.

19 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Okay.

20 JUDGE RILEY: Then let's leave it at that.

21 We will revisit this matter on
22 November 20 at 11:00 a.m. and we'll see where we

1 stand at that point.

2 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Okay.

3 MR. GOLDSTEIN: Thank you, Judge.

4 JUDGE RILEY: Thank you.

5 MS. V. WILLIAMS: Thank you, your Honor.

6 MS. J. WILLIAMS: Thank you.

7 (Whereupon, the above-entitled
8 matter was continued to
9 November 20, 2008.)

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